

rating, testing, and other courses taken. It also lists courses remaining to be completed and serves as your checklist for future studies at SOCCOAST network colleges anywhere else in the world. **It is your contract, your degree plan, and a road map to program completion.** Your home college will give you a copy to take with you; keep it and have it updated as you continue your studies. *You are not a SOCCOAST student, and you do not have the SOCCOAST transfer guarantees until you have been given a SOCCOAST Student Agreement by your home college.*

### How do I begin as a SOCCOAST student?

Your first step is to consult with your Coast Guard Education Services Officer who will help you locate available programs of study and can give you an estimate of the college credit you may already have earned from your Coast Guard training and experience, courses you've already completed, tests you've taken, etc. The Education Services Officer will advise you whom to contact at the SOCCOAST college for further counseling, course selection, and official issuance of the SOCCOAST Student Agreement that serves as your contract-for-degree. You may contact the SOC office at 1-800-368-5622 or e-mail [socmail@aascu.org](mailto:socmail@aascu.org) for help in getting started as a SOCCOAST student.

### What is academic residency?

Academic residency is the number of credit hours within a degree program that must be taken with the degree-granting college. SOCCOAST colleges limit academic residency requirements for active-duty Coast Guard personnel and adult family members to no more than 25 percent of the undergraduate program.

### What happens when the Coast Guard reassigns me?

Consult with the Coast Guard Education Services Officer before leaving. Your SOCCOAST Student Agreement will be reviewed to determine what you have completed and what remains to be done. You will be advised which colleges participate in your network at your new duty station. Check in with the new Coast Guard Education Services Officer; show your SOCCOAST Student Agreement to the Education Services Officer, and you will be advised which courses you can take to complete your plan of study. If no participating SOCCOAST college is avail-

able, the Education Services Officer can help you get formal approval from your home college to take courses from a college not in a SOCCOAST network.

### What if I leave the Coast Guard before graduating?

If you leave the Coast Guard before you complete your program, the SOCCOAST Student Agreement guarantees that your college credits will not be lost and you can finish your studies as a civilian — assuming you have satisfied the home college's academic residency requirement and can take the remaining courses with another college. If the college is not in SOCCOAST, you'll have to get the courses approved by your home college.

### Can my family benefit from SOCCOAST?

Yes, SOCCOAST colleges will enroll adult family members under the same terms as servicemembers.

### Can Coast Guard reservists, veterans, and civil service employees benefit from SOCCOAST?

For Coast Guard reservists, U.S. Coast Guard civil service employees, Coast Guard members returning to civilian life to begin or continue study, SOCCOAST institutions provide appropriate evaluation of their training, experience, and prior study and other services similar to that afforded other service-members.

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*SOC is sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the American Association of Community Colleges together with 13 other national associations in higher education, the Department of Defense, the Military Services including the National Guard, and the Coast Guard.*



### Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges

# SOCCOAST

Degree Programs for the Coast Guard



## Earn a college degree while you're in the Coast Guard

### SOCCOAST provides ...

- ▶ A one-time evaluation of prior learning experiences
- ▶ College credit for Coast Guard schools and rates and ratings
- ▶ A complete degree plan
- ▶ Guaranteed course transfer
- ▶ A home college to award an Associate or Bachelor's degree

## You can get a college education through the SOCCOAST system – in more than one way



### Traditional Delivery

Take courses in regular classrooms from a SOCCOAST college at its home campus or at satellite locations at Coast Guard units.



### Distance Learning

Take courses on your own wherever you are – through the Internet, CD-ROM, TV, correspondence, etc. — offered by a SOCCOAST college.



### Learning Assessment

Take courses in an external degree study package put together by a SOCCOAST college. In this approach, you may never take a class with your home college, but it designs and manages your program – evaluating your previous learning experiences and telling you what courses to take at other colleges and, ultimately, awarding your degree.

Whichever way you go, your SOCCOAST home college will give you appropriate credit for the courses and national examinations you've already taken and for other learning experiences, including your Coast Guard schools and Coast Guard rate and rating.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT SOCCOAST



### Why should I get a college education?

A college education can be a major step on your road to better pay, promotions, increased responsibility – or an interesting civilian job after your Coast Guard career.

### What is SOCCOAST?

SOCCOAST is the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges degree program for the Coast Guard. SOCCOAST-2 consists of accredited colleges that offer associate degree programs on or accessible to Coast Guard units worldwide. The bachelor's degree equivalent is SOCCOAST-4. These civilian colleges have joined together to form networks in which each college accepts credits from all the others. **This guarantees that you can continue toward your degree even though the Coast Guard may transfer you several times.** The SOCCOAST system solves the problem of starting your studies at one place and finishing at another.

### Where is SOCCOAST available?

SOCCOAST programs with traditional classroom study can be taken initially at Alameda, CA; Tidewater, VA, and Miami, FL with future expansion planned. Using SOCCOAST's distance learning and learning assessment options, you can study anywhere.

### Can I get college credit for my experience?

SOCCOAST was designed to build on your Coast Guard training and experience. It was developed specifically for enlisted personnel whose Coast Guard rate, rating, and schools may already have earned them college credits. These college credits are listed in the *ACE Guide*, which is available online at <http://www.militaryguides.acenet.edu/> or via the Coast Guard Institute: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi>

### What can I study?

Initially, degree networks at the associate and baccalaureate level will focus on aviation maintenance technology, aviation flight technology, business administration, computer science, criminal justice, electronics technology, environmental science, human resources management, individualized studies, and nursing/health studies. Of course, liberal arts and liberal studies are available to those desiring a more general degree.

### What if I can't attend regular classes?

Through the Distance Learning and Learning Assessment methods described on the opposite page, you can achieve college credit and a degree with a combination of correspondence type courses, CLEP and DANTES testing, and *ACE Guide* credit for your military experience.

### Can I get financial assistance for my studies?

If you were attracted to the Coast Guard by the GI Bill, tuition assistance, or other educational funding opportunities, don't delay! Begin your college studies now. The Coast Guard will pay a substantial part of tuition costs for courses taken while you're on active duty. For details, ask your Coast Guard Education Services Officer or see the Institute home page for funding information.

### What is a SOCCOAST "home college?"

A **home college** is the SOCCOAST college where you begin your studies and complete the minimum academic residency; you do not have to take more than 25 percent of the program with your home college, and these courses can be taken with the college at any time and anywhere – even at sea. (Learning assessment colleges do not have residency requirements.) The **home college** evaluates your Coast Guard rate and rating and other learning experiences, combining them all into a **SOCCOAST Student Agreement that serves as your contract-for-degree**. When you have completed your study plan, the **home college** awards your degree.

### What is the SOCCOAST Student Agreement?

A **SOCCOAST Student Agreement** is the form on which the home college makes a complete evaluation of the college credit you should receive on the basis of your Coast Guard rate and